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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS SPECIAL SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: W. McLENNAN (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Chapter ____

STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL COOPERATION

(Agenda item 3)

1. The Commission expressed its appreciation for the progress that had been made on the recommendations and decisions that it had made at its twenty-seventh session. It welcomed the strong cooperation that was evident among the international organizations, and endorsed the improved methods of operation that had been introduced and the close working relationships that had been developed by the Working Group and the Subcommittee on Statistical Activities of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC).

2. The Commission stressed the central role of The Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat in promoting the coordination of international work. It reaffirmed the important role the regional commissions must play as well, and it considered that the mandate of the statistical work undertaken in the regional commissions should be specified in operational terms to enable them to fulfil that role. The Commission adopted the following text [to be added]. In addition, the Commission recognized that extra resources would be required at the regional level.

Action taken by the Commission

3. The Commission requested:

(a) The Secretariat to study national and regional experiences, with a view to adapting practices that may be useful in promoting coordination and development at the international level;

(b) Countries and international organizations to improve the network of communications among themselves, particularly through electronic methods, to further promote coordination.

4. As a matter of principle, the Commission reiterated the importance of minimizing duplication or overlap in data collection from countries and of maximizing data-sharing among the international organizations. It also emphasized the importance of coordination in related international statistical standards and guidelines, taking due account of differences in national circumstances, particularly in the context of the 1993 SNA.

5. The Commission also requested the Secretariat in future to prepare self-contained reports, in so far as it was possible.

6. After a wide-ranging discussion on the general work of the task forces, the Commission:

(a) Decided that the task forces should concentrate initially on the coordination of statistical activities across the international agencies;

(b) Suggested that its Working Group should continue to play an active "bureau" role in monitoring and assisting with the work of the task forces;

(c) Encouraged all the task forces to examine closely the work of the relevant agencies on data collection, processing and dissemination, the development and implementation of standards, concepts and methods, the development of directories, inventories and other tasks, and technical cooperation;

(d) Requested the Secretariat to compile a single statement of the agreed terms of reference of the task forces;

(e) Requested the task forces to keep national statistical offices informed of developments.

7. It was on this basis that the Commission then reviewed the reports of the separate task forces.